

## CHAPTER 17

# TODAY'S TERRORISTS ARE KHARIJITES



ALTHOUGH WE HAVE DETAILED NUMEROUS HADITH REPORTS ABOUT the Kharijites here, there are scores more that we have not mentioned.<sup>1</sup> There is no denying the fact that every era has its share of people who possess the ideas, inclinations and proclivities of the Kharijites. The Prophet ﷺ made it clear that these groups would comprise immature youth who are sidetracked by propaganda and brainwashing and encouraged to commit wanton acts of violence.

It is also clear from the hadith reports that the Kharijites are not exclusive to any one given period and that they will continue to appear until the emergence of the Anti-Christ. The Prophet ﷺ said,

يَخْرُجُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قِبَلِ الْمَشْرِقِ يَقْرَأُونَ الْقُرْآنَ، لَا يُجَاوِزُ تَرَاقِيهِمْ. كُلَّمَا قُطِعَ قَرْنٌ نَشَأَ قَرْنٌ، حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ فِي بَقِيَّتِهِمُ الدَّجَالُ.

‘There shall appear a group in the direction of the east who will recite the Qur’ān but it will not pass their throats. Every time a generation of them appears it will be cut down until the Anti-Christ appears from their last remnants’.<sup>2</sup>

We see from this hadith that the Prophet ﷺ informed that the Kharijites will continue to emerge and spread tumult until the appearance of the Anti-Christ, which is one of the major portents of the Final Hour. In the final days of his *Umma*, there shall emerge a group with the faces of humans but with the hearts of devils. Abū Hurayra رضى الله عنه reported that the Prophet ﷺ said,

يَخْرُجُ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ رِجَالٌ يَخْتَلُونَ الدُّنْيَا بِالذِّينِ. يَلْبَسُونَ لِلنَّاسِ جُلُودَ الضَّأْنِ

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed listing of hadith reports about the Kharijites, see my other book, *al-Intibāh li al-khawārij wa al-ḥarūrā*.

<sup>2</sup> Narrated by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 2:209 §6952; al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, 7:41 §6791; al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak*, 4:556 §8558; al-Ṭayālīsī in *al-Musnad*, p. 302 §2293; and Abū Nuʿaym in *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ*, 6:54.

مِنَ اللَّيْنِ. أَلَسِنَتُهُمْ أَحْلَى مِنَ السُّكَّرِ، وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الذَّنَابِ. يَقُولُ اللَّهُ: أَيْيَ يَغْتَرُونَ أَمْ عَلَيَّ يَجْتَرُونَ؟ فَبِي حَلَفْتُ لَا بُعْتَنَّ عَلَى أُولَئِكَ مِنْهُمْ فَتَنَةً تَدْعُ الْحَلِيمَ مِنْهُمْ حَيْرَانًا.

‘In the final days there shall appear men who acquire the world by means of the religion. In front of people they will wear the garments of sheepskins, to exhibit their gentility, and their tongues will be sweeter than sugar, but their hearts will be those of wolves. God will say, “Do they delude in My name, or do they act haughtily before Me? I swear by My Being, I will surely send a tribulation against them that will leave the [seemingly] forbearing amongst them bewildered”.’<sup>1</sup>

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه reported that the Messenger of God ﷺ said,

سَجِيءٌ فِي آخِرِ الزَّمَانِ أَقْوَامٌ، يَكُونُ وُجُوهُهُمْ وَجُوهَ الْآدَمِيِّينَ، وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قُلُوبُ الشَّيَاطِينِ، أَمْثَالُ الذَّنَابِ الصَّوَارِيِّ، لَيْسَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ، سَفَاكُونَ لِلدَّمَاءِ، لَا يَرْغَعُونَ عَنْ قَبِيحٍ، إِنْ تَابَعَتْهُمْ وَارْبُوكَ، وَإِنْ تَوَارَيْتَ عَنْهُمْ اعْتَابُوكَ، وَإِنْ حَدَّثُوكَ كَذَبُوكَ، وَإِنْ انْتَمَتَتْهُمْ خَانُوكَ. صَبِيَّهُمْ عَامِرٌ وَسَابِيَّهُمْ شَاطِرٌ وَشَيْخُهُمْ لَا يَأْمُرُ بِمَعْرُوفٍ وَلَا يَنْهَى عَنْ مُنْكَرٍ، الْأَعْتَزَّازُ بِهِمْ ذُلٌّ، وَطَلَبُ مَا فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ فَقْرٌ، الْحَلِيمُ فِيهِمْ غَاوٍ، وَالْأَمْرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ فِيهِمْ مُتَّهَمٌ، الْمُؤْمِنُ فِيهِمْ مُسْتَضْعَفٌ، وَالْفَاسِقُ فِيهِمْ مُشْرِفٌ، أَلْسُنُهُ فِيهِمْ بَدْعَةٌ، وَالْبِدْعَةُ فِيهِمْ سُنَّةٌ، فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يُسَلِّطُ عَلَيْهِمْ شِرَارَهُمْ، وَيَدْعُو خِيَارَهُمْ فَلَا يَسْتَجَابُ لَهُمْ.

‘In the final days there shall appear groups of people with the faces of humans but with the hearts of devils, like that of raging wolves. There will not be found in their hearts even an iota of mercy. They will be given to shedding blood in abundance. They will not have any compunction

<sup>1</sup> Narrated by al-Tirmidhī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb al-zuhd* [The Book of Renunciation], 4:604 §2404.

in committing odious acts. If you pledge your fealty to them they will betray you, and if you get away from them [for your safety] they will backbite you. When they speak to you they will lie, and if you trust them they will betray their trust. The children amongst them will run the household; the youth amongst them will be cunning; and their elder [leader] will not enjoin the good and forbid the evil. To feel honour through them is humiliation and to seek what is in their hands [i.e., their ideologies and arms] is poverty [it will destroy the economy]. The [seemingly] forbearing one amongst them will be an allurer; the one who enjoins the good and forbids the evil amongst them will be suspect; the believer amongst them will be weak; and the corrupt amongst them will be honoured. The Sunna will be seen as blameworthy innovation, and blameworthy innovation will be seen as Sunna. During that time, their evil ones will gain authority over them, and the best of them will supplicate [God] but they will not be answered'.<sup>1</sup>

These traditions vividly describe the traits possessed by the modern-day terrorists. They have the faces of humans but the hearts of devils. They are devoid of mercy and full of contempt for others. They not only accuse Muslims of disbelief and polytheism, but they also target them in attacks, kill them and—to add insult to injury—film these gory scenes and disseminate them, thus bringing Islam and Muslims into disrepute.

Ibn Taymiyya said,

وَكَذَلِكَ الْخَوَارِجُ: لَمَّا كَانُوا أَهْلَ سَيْفٍ وَقِتَالٍ، ظَهَرَتْ مُخَالَفَتُهُمْ لِلْجَمَاعَةِ؛ حِينَ كَانُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ النَّاسَ. وَأَمَّا الْيَوْمَ فَلَا يَعْرِفُهُمْ أَكْثَرُ النَّاسِ.

‘And likewise the Kharijites: since they were armed and inclined to fight, their opposition to the community [jamā‘a] manifested when they fought people. However,

<sup>1</sup> Narrated by al-Ṭabarānī in *al-Mu‘jam al-kabīr*, 11:99 §11169; and in *al-Mu‘jam al-ṣaghīr*, 2:111 §869.

as for today, most people do not know of them [due to their religious disguise]’.<sup>1</sup>

This begs the question, if they were hidden before, how did they become known? Ibn Taymiyya answered that, saying:

هَاتَانِ الْبِدْعَتَانِ ظَهَرَتَا لَمَّا قُتِلَ عُثْمَانُ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ؛ فِي خِلَافَةِ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ؛ وَظَهَرَتِ الْخَوَارِجُ بِمُفَارَقَةِ أَهْلِ الْجَمَاعَةِ، وَاسْتِحْلَالِ دِمَائِهِمْ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ؛ حَتَّى قَاتَلَهُمْ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيٌّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مُتَّبِعًا فِي ذَلِكَ لِأَمْرِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ. قَالَ الْإِمَامُ أَحْمَدُ بْنُ حَنْبَلٍ: صَحَّ الْحَدِيثُ فِي الْخَوَارِجِ مِنْ عَشْرَةِ أَوْجِهٍ. وَهَذِهِ قَدْ رَوَاهَا صَاحِبُهُ مُسْلِمٌ بْنُ الْحَجَّاجِ فِي صَحِيحِهِ، وَرَوَى الْبُخَارِيُّ قِطْعَةً مِنْهَا. وَاتَّفَقَتِ الصَّحَابَةُ عَلَى قِتَالِ الْخَوَارِجِ حَتَّى أَنَّ ابْنَ عُمَرَ . . . قَالَ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ: مَا آسَى عَلَى شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عَلَى أَنِّي لَمْ أَقَاتِلِ الطَّاغُتَةَ الْبَاغِيَةَ مَعَ عَلِيٍّ، يُرِيدُ بِذَلِكَ قِتَالَ الْخَوَارِجِ. . . . وَإِنَّمَا أَرَادَ الْمَارِقَةَ الَّتِي قَالَ فِيهَا النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: تَمُرُّقُ مَارِقَةٌ عَلَى حِينِ فُرْقَةٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ، يَفْتُلُهُمْ أَذْنَى الطَّاغُتَيْنِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ. وَهَذَا حَدَّثَ بِهِ أَبُو سَعِيدٍ. فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ ابْنُ عُمَرَ قَوْلَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ فِي الْخَوَارِجِ، وَأَمْرُهُ بِقِتَالِهِمْ، تَحَسَّرَ عَلَى تَرْكِ قِتَالِهِمْ.

The two innovations [declaring the Muslims disbelievers and considering their property lawful] appeared when ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was killed during the turmoil, and during the caliphate of the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. The Kharijites appeared by splitting off from the community and declaring their blood and wealth lawful, until the Commander of the Faithful, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ fought against them—following the command of the Prophet ﷺ. Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said, ‘The hadith about them is authentic from ten different angles [chains of narration]’. These [hadith reports] were narrated by Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* collection, and al-Bukhārī narrated a portion of them. The Companions were in unanimous agreement that the Kharijites were to be fought; to the point that Ibn ‘Umar . . . said on

<sup>1</sup> Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Nubuwwāt*, p. 222.

his deathbed, 'I regret nothing save that I did not fight with 'Alī against the rebellious faction'. By that he meant the Kharijites. . . . [H]e only meant the ones who 'passed through' [*māriqa*], about whom the Prophet ﷺ said, 'A group will pass through [*tamruq*] during a time in which people are disunited; the closest of the two groups to the truth will fight against them'. This is what Abū Sa'īd narrated. Hence, when the statement of the Prophet ﷺ regarding the Kharijites reached Ibn 'Umar, he felt regret that he did not fight against them.<sup>1</sup>

From all of this we can gather that people generally mistake the Kharijites for righteous people due to their outward appearance and ostensible religiosity; however, they reveal their true colours when they take up arms and murder harmless people. The Kharijites are not identified by the name 'Kharijite' written on their foreheads; they are identified as Kharijites by their barbaric actions.

### 17.1 CONDEMNATION OF THOSE WHO SUPPORT THE KHARIJITE TERRORISTS

There are some people who have a soft spot in their hearts for the Kharijite terrorists. They do not consider them evil, and might even offer them physical, financial or moral support. Those who support the Kharijites are called *Qa'diyya* [literally, 'the sitters']. Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī said,

“الْقَعْدِيَّةُ” قَوْمٌ مِنَ الْخَوَارِجِ، كَانُوا يَقُولُونَ بِقَوْلِهِمْ، وَلَا يَرَوْنَ الْخُرُوجَ بَلْ يُزَيِّنُونَهُ.

'The *Qa'diyya* are a folk from the Kharijites who held the beliefs of the latter but would only justify rebellion, without actually participating in it'.<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere he wrote,

الْخَوَارِجُ الَّذِينَ أَنْكَرُوا عَلَى عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ وَتَبَرَّءُوا مِنْهُ وَمِنْ عُمَانَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ وَدُرَيْتِهِ

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 222–223.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fath al-Bārī*, 1:432.

وَقَاتِلُوهُمْ، فَإِنْ أَطْلَقُوا تَكْفِيرَهُمْ فَهُمْ الْغَلَاةُ مِنْهُمْ وَالْقَعْدِيَّةُ الَّذِينَ يُزَيِّنُونَ الْخُرُوجَ عَلَى الْأُتَمَّةِ وَلَا يُبَاشِرُونَ ذَلِكَ.

‘The Kharijites are those who censured ‘Alī عليه السلام because of the act of arbitration, and disavowed themselves from him and ‘Uthmān عليه السلام and his family and fought against them. If their charge of disbelief is general [to everyone except them], they are considered of the extreme [Kharijites]. The *Qa‘diyya* justify rebelling against the Muslim governments but do not participate in it directly’.<sup>1</sup>

In *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*, he said,

”الْقَعْدُ“ الْخَوَارِجُ كَانُوا لَا يَزُونَ بِالْحَرْبِ، بَلْ يُنْكِرُونَ عَلَى أُمَرَاءِ الْجَوْرِ حَسَبِ الطَّاقَةِ، وَيَدْعُونَ إِلَى رَأْيِهِمْ، وَيُزَيِّنُونَ مَعَ ذَلِكَ الْخُرُوجَ، وَيُحْسِنُونَهُ.

‘The *Qa‘diyya* are Kharijites who do not believe in waging war; rather, they censure the unjust rulers according to their ability, invite others to their belief, and in addition to that, they beautify and justify rebellion [through religious garbs]’.<sup>2</sup>

In general, the *Qa‘diyya* do not openly express their views. They work behind the scenes and support those who rebel. They sow the seeds of dissension, disruption and strife in the hearts of people, which is especially dangerous when conducted by one who is eloquent and who mixes his speech with references to the Sunna.

## 17.2 AN IMPORTANT JURISTIC ISSUE: LABELLING THE TERRORISTS AS KHARIJITES IS BASED ON THE QUR’ĀN AND SUNNA, NOT INDEPENDENT REASONING [*IJTIHĀD*]

Our judgement that the terrorists of today are Kharijites is not based on independent reasoning; rather, it is based on the Qur’ān

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 1:459.

<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Tahdhib al-tahdhib*, 8:114.



and the Sunna. The Kharijites are not merely the sect of old that rebelled against our master, 'Alī (عليه السلام). Certainly, they were their vanguard, but, as we have mentioned, the tribulation of the Kharijites has emerged time and time again, and will continue to emerge until the appearance of the Anti-Christ.

According to Sharīk b. Shihāb (رضي الله عنه), the Messenger of God (ﷺ) said about the Kharijites,

لَا يَزَالُونَ يَخْرُجُونَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ آخِرُهُمْ مَعَ الْمَسِيحِ الدَّجَالِ، فَإِذَا لَقِيتُمُوهُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ هُمْ شَرُّ الْخَلْقِ وَالْخَلِيقَةِ.

'They shall continue to appear until the last of them appears with the Anti-Christ [al-Dajjāl]; so you should kill them when you encounter them [in the battlefield]. They are the most evil of the creation'.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, Imam Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Imam Ibn Abī Shayba narrated,

لَا يَزَالُونَ يَخْرُجُونَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ آخِرُهُمْ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ، قَالَهَا ثَلَاثًا. شَرُّ الْخَلْقِ وَالْخَلِيقَةِ. قَالَهَا ثَلَاثًا.

'They will not cease to emerge, until the last group of them emerges [with the Anti-Christ]; so you should kill them when you encounter them [in the battlefield]. They are the most evil of creation'. He repeated these words three times.<sup>2</sup>

And Imam al-Ḥākim narrated a hadith report with these words,

لَا يَزَالُونَ يَخْرُجُونَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ آخِرُهُمْ، فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُوهُمْ فَاقْتُلُوهُمْ. قَالَهَا حَمَادٌ ثَلَاثًا.

<sup>1</sup> Narrated by al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb taḥrīm al-dam* [The Book on the Prohibition of Bloodshed], chapter: 'Regarding the One Who Unsheathes His Sword and Wields it amongst People', 7:119 §4103; al-Nasā'ī in *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 2:312 §3566; al-Bazzār in *al-Musnad*, 9:294 §3846; and al-Ṭayālīsī in *al-Musnad*, 1:124 §923.

<sup>2</sup> Narrated by Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 4:421 §19798; Ibn Abī Shayba in *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:559 §37917; and al-Ruyānī in *al-Musnad*, 2:26 §766.

هُمْ شَرُّ الْخَلْقِ وَالْخَلِيقَةِ. قَالَهَا حَمَّادٌ ثَلَاثًا. وَقَالَ: قَالَ أَيْضًا: لَا يَرْجِعُونَ فِيهِ.

‘They will not cease to emerge, until the last group of them comes forth [with the Anti-Christ]; so you should kill them when you encounter them [in the battlefield]. [According to Ḥammād, a reporter of the tradition:] “The Messenger of God ﷺ repeated these words three times.” [Ḥammād said:] The Messenger of God ﷺ added: “They will not turn from their doctrine and ideology”.<sup>1</sup>

In the preceding hadith reports, the Messenger of God ﷺ has clarified that the rebels will continuously form groups and emerge in Muslim states and societies. The word, *lā yazālūna yakhrujūna*, [they will not cease to emerge] indicate that all these groups will be Kharijites and will continue to appear until their last party rise with the Anti-Christ before the end of time.

### 17.3 SUMMARY

This detailed discussion highlighting the signs, traits and features of the Kharijites proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that the modern-day terrorists are their contemporary embodiment. It is, therefore, our religious and national duty to expose them who they are and detail the threat they pose to peace and coexistence.

Although they mask themselves with the garb of religion, we should not be fooled, for their mischief and evil show us who they really are. They have no connection with Islam, no matter what religious trappings they take on. They are outside of the fold of Islam and have passed through it just as an arrow passes through a hunted game; their criminal acts cannot be associated with Islam or the Muslims.

Both the early and latter-day Islamic scholars have unanimously agreed that—in the light of the Qur’ānic verses and hadith reports—the Kharijite terrorists have nothing to do with Islam. Traditional Islamic teachings hold that such people are rebels

<sup>1</sup> Narrated by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak*, 2:160 §2647; and al-Haythamī in *Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id*, 6:229.

and that it is the duty of the state to eliminate them. Having said that, a word of caution must be mentioned: the duty of removing the Kharijite cancer from society is the responsibility of the state alone. Vigilantism is not allowed in the Islamic Sacred Law. No individual or private band of citizens is allowed to take up arms against terrorists with the intention of eliminating them and restoring peace in society. Such a venture will inevitably lead to more harm than good and bring about drastic consequences.

The Messenger of God ﷺ foretold the perpetual emergence and rising of Kharijites in every era in the form of well-organized militant groups to put the Muslims on alert, and so that they might recognize them. The Muslims should not be mistaken by their guised faces and appearances, slogans and high claims on Shariah. Simultaneously, he declared that the state must come into action to eliminate them, in order to save the peaceful community from their terror, bloodshed and plunder. That is the reason why the Companions رضي الله عنهم joined our master ʿAlī رضي الله عنه to uproot the terrorists, the Kharijites, at state level and founded a tradition for the coming generations.